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III.—THE CHRISTIAN COLORING IN THE *BEOWULF*.

It is admitted by all critics that the *Beowulf* is essentially a heathen poem; that its materials are drawn from tales composed before the conversion of the Angles and Saxons to Christianity, and that there was a time when these tales were repeated without the Christian reflections and allusions that are found in the poem that has reached us. But in what form this heathen material existed before it was put into its present shape is a question on which opinions are widely different. In the nature of the case we can look for no entire consensus of opinion and no exact answer to the question; the most that one can expect to establish is at the best only a probability.

The following hypotheses are possible:

1. The poem was composed by a Christian, who had heard the stories and used them as the material for his work.
2. The poem was composed by a Christian, who used old lays as his material. (This differs from the first supposition in assuming that the tales had already been versified and were in poetical form before they were used by the author.)
3. The poem was composed by a heathen, either from old stories or from old lays. At a later date it was revised by a Christian poet, to whom we owe the Christian allusions found in it. (This hypothesis differs from the others in assuming the existence of a complete poem without the Christian coloring.)

The purpose of the present study is to contribute to the settlement of the question inferences drawn from a careful examination of the passages that show a Christian coloring. Whether the *Beowulf* is a unit or a compilation made from several poems originally distinct is not considered, except in so far as a conclusion may be drawn from the character of the Christian allusions, and all other questions in regard to the

genesis of the Epic in general or of the *Beowulf* in particular are also left untouched.

It must be noted, however, at the beginning of the discussion, that it is not in all cases a simple matter to decide whether a passage under consideration is Christian in character. It is clear, I think, that we have no right to classify under this head those passages that are simply moral and ethical. The commandment not to bear false witness is regarded with good reason as a fundamental part of Christian doctrine, but when the dying Beowulf says, 'I sought not unrighteous strife nor swore oaths deceitfully,' we are justified in claiming the passage as Christian only by bringing proof that our forefathers, before they were enlightened by the instruction of Christian missionaries, thought false oaths right and proper. But when the hero continues, 'In all this I may rejoice, though sick with mortal wounds, for when my life hath left my body, the Ruler of men may not charge me with the murder of my kindred,' we may properly recognize the Christian coloring. This does not lie in the assertion of the speaker that he has kept the commandment not to kill, for Christianity can claim a monopoly of this no more than of the other just referred to, but in the apparent reference to a judgment after death and to the Ruler who is to try men for their deeds; a reference that seems to prove the writer's knowledge of the teaching of the Gospels.

Other passages are doubtful for a different reason. It is well known that the missionaries of the early Church took many words belonging to heathen beliefs and practices and applied them to corresponding conceptions and usages of the Christian system. In *Yule*, *Easter*, *God*, *hell*, etc., we still keep words thus adopted; others, now obsolete, are *hælend*, *nergend*, *drihten*, *metod*, *frea*, etc. To these may be added the various epithets applied to the Persons of the Trinity, which are used so freely by the Old English poets. Most of these are simply equivalents of Latin expressions, or imitations of them; e. g. *œlmihtig* (omnipotens); *ece drihten* (dominus æter-

nus); *wuldorcýning* (rex gloriæ); and the like. This use of native words and epithets is nothing peculiar, of course; the same thing had already taken place in Latin and had given to *deus*, *dominus*, etc. their ecclesiastical meaning. But when such words are first used by the church, it is plain that something of the old meaning still clings to them and is suggested to the hearer. In some cases the older meaning vanishes after a time or becomes entirely subordinated to the later one; e. g. the word *Christ* has entirely lost, for most of those that use or hear it, its original meaning; *God* and *Saviour* have the older and more general meaning at times, but more often the later specialized one; *Father* and *Son*, as names of the Persons of the Trinity, are far less frequent than as ordinary names of relationship. We cannot always feel certain, therefore, in reading the *Beowulf*, whether the word is used by the writer with full consciousness of its later sense or with its older meaning. All cases of this kind are included in the following discussion; the question whether the earlier or the later meaning is to be assumed is considered in its place.

There are in the *Beowulf* sixty-eight passages in which the form of expression or the character of the thought seems to suggest something in Christian usage or doctrine, and we may properly assume that they had this effect on Christian readers at the time that the manuscript that has reached us was written. These passages may be classified according to content as follows:

1. Passages containing Bible history or allusions to some Scripture narrative.
2. Passages containing expressions in disapproval of heathen ideas or heathen worship.
3. Passages containing references to doctrines distinctively Christian.
4. Incidental allusions to the Christian God, to his attributes, and to his part in shaping the lives and fortunes of men. The fourth class is by far the most numerous; it comprises fifty-three cases, while under the first only

three passages fall, under the second one, and under the third ten.

Of the three passages under the head of Scripture history, two refer to the Creation, the Fall, and the death of Abel; one contains an allusion to the Flood. They are found in vv. 90–113; 1261–1266; 1687–1693.

Under the second head, disapproval of heathenism, falls a single passage, vv. 175–178.

These four passages are of much greater length than those under the other two heads, and a closer study shows that they differ also in other respects. They will be taken up for consideration after we have examined the others.

The third class comprises ten allusions, more or less distinct, to Christian doctrines. Of these one refers to reward in heaven, six to hell or its inhabitants, and three to the day of judgment. They are the following:

756. *deofla gedræg,*
‘the throng of devils.’

788. *hellehæfton,*
‘hell’s captive.’

808. *feonda geweald,*
‘the power of fiends.’

852. *hæpene sawle þær him hel onfeng,*
‘the heathen soul, there hell received him.’

977. *ðær abidan sceal*
maga mane fah miclan domes
hu him scir metod scrifan wille,
‘there stained with crime must the man await the
great doom, how the pure Lord will appoint for him.’

1274. *gehnægde hellegast,*
‘crushed the hellish spirit.’

2741. for ðam me witan ne ðearf waldend fira
 morðorbealo maga þonne min sceaceð
 lif of lice,
 'for when my life hath left my body, the Ruler of
 men may not charge me with the murder of my kins-
 men.'
2819. him of hwæðre gewat
 sawol secean soðfæstra dom,
 'his soul departed to seek the lot of the righteous.'
3069. oð domes dæg,
 'until doomsday.'
3072. hellbendum fæst,
 'fast in the bonds of hell.'

These passages, when studied in connection with the context, are found, with one or two exceptions, to lack the clearness that one would wish in deciding how far Christian influence has shaped them. For example, the reference in 977 ff. seems when standing by itself to be a clear allusion to the day of judgment, but in the poem it is put into the mouth of Beowulf, who assures Hrothgar that the escape of Grendel is a matter of no importance, since his wound is surely mortal. The doom that Grendel must abide seems therefore to be death. The allusions to hell in 788, 852 and 3072, become equally doubtful when we remember that Hel is the goddess of the world of the dead and corresponds to the classical Persephone. If we treat the word as a proper name we make the allusion entirely heathen. But "hellegast," in 1274, we may assume, would be used only by a Christian. Other passages receive their Christian coloring from the use of the words *deofol* and *feond*. But it is not certain that *feond*, which strictly means 'foe,' has here the later sense that we now attach to the word 'fiend,' and *deofol*, though it was introduced from Latin with the coming of Christianity, does not refer in v. 756 to the devils of hell, but to the ocean

811. fag wið god,
‘hostile to God.’
928. alwealdan þanc,
‘thanks to the Almighty.’
930. a mæg god wyrcan
wunder æfter wundre wuldres hyrde,
‘ever can God, the glorious protector, work wonder
on wonder.’
940. þurh drihtnes miht,
‘through the might of the Lord.’
945. þæt hyre eald metod este wære,
‘that the ancient Lord was kindly toward her.’
955. alwalda þec
gode forgyldre,
‘the Almighty repay thee with good!’
967. þa metod nolde,
‘since the Lord was unwilling.’
1056. nefne him witig god wyrð forstode
ȝ ðæs mannes mod metod eallum weold
gumena cynnes swa he nu git deð,
‘had not the wise God, fate and the man’s courage
withstood him. The Lord ruled all men, as he still
doth.’
1271. ðe him god sealde,
‘which God gave him.’
- ?1314. hwæpre him alwalda æfre wille
æfter weaspelle wyrpe gefremman,
‘whether the Almighty (alwalda by conj.) after a
period of sorrow will work a change.’
1397. gode þancode
mihtigan drihtne,
‘thanked God, the mighty Lord.’

1553. ȝ halig god
 geweold wigsigor wihtig drihten
 rodera rædend hit on riht gesceod,
 ‘and the holy God, the wise Lord, the Ruler of the
 skies, controlled the victory, adjudged it rightly.’
1609. þonne forstes bend fæder onlæteð
 onwindeð wælrapas se geweald hafað
 sæla ȝ mæla þæt is soð metod,
 ‘when the Father, that hath control of times and
 seasons, that is the true Lord, looseth the fetters of
 the frost, etc.’
1626. gode þancodon,
 ‘thanked God.’
1658. nymðe mec god scylde,
 ‘had not God protected me.’
1661. ac me geuðe ylða waldend
 þæt ic on wage geseah wlitig hangian,
 ‘but the Ruler of men granted to me to see hang-
 ing on the wall, etc.’
1682. godes ȝsaca,
 ‘God’s adversary.’
1716. ðeah þe hine mihtig god mægenes wynnum
 eafeþum stepte ofer ealle men
 forð gefremede,
 ‘though the mighty God had aided him with the
 joys of power and with might, etc.’
1724. wundor is to secganne
 hu mihtig god manna cynne
 þurh sidne sefan snyttru bryttað
 eard ȝ eorlscipe he ah ealra geweald,
 ‘wondrous is it to tell how the mighty God giveth
 to mankind wisdom, home, and rank. He hath power
 over all, etc.’

1751. þæs þe him ær god sealde
wuldres waldend weorðmynda dæl,
“after God, the glorious Ruler, hath given him
much honor.’

1778. þæs sig metode þanc
eecean drihtne,
“for this thanks be to the Lord, the eternal Prince!’

1841. þe þa wordcwidas wigtig drihten
on sefan sende,
‘the wise Lord hath put these words into thy heart.’

1997. gode ic þanc sege,
‘I thank God.’

2182. ginfæstan gife þe him god sealde,
‘the ample gifts that God had given him.’

2186.? drihten wereda,
‘Lord of hosts’ (?).

2292. se ðe waldendes
hyldo gehealdeð,
‘who hath the favor of the Ruler.’

2329. þæt he wealdende
* * * * eecan drihtne
bitre gebulge,
‘that he had angered the Ruler, the eternal Lord.’

2469. godes leoht geceas,
‘chose God’s light” (*i. e.* died).

2650. god wat,
‘God knows.’

2794. ic ðara frætwa frean ealles ðanc
wuldurcynninge wordū secge
ecum drihtne,
‘I thank the Lord of all, the King of glory, the
eternal Lord, for these treasures.’

2857. ne ðæs wealdendes wiht oncyrran
 wolde dom godes dædū rædan
 gumena gehwylcū swa he gen deð,
 'nor change the Ruler's will (willan by conj.); the
 power of God was to rule the fate of every man, as
 yet it doth.'
2874. hwæðre hī god uðe
 sigora waldend þæt he hyne sylfne gewræc
 'yet God, the ruler of victories, let him avenge
 himself.'
3054. nefne god sylfa
 sigora soðcýning sealde þam ðe he wolde
 he is manna gehyld hord openian
 efne swa hwylcū manna swa hī gemet ðuhte,
 'unless God himself, the true King of victories
 (he is the protection of men), should grant to whom
 he would to open the hoard, even to whomsoever he
 thought fitting.'
3109. on ðæs waldendes wære,
 'into the Ruler's keeping.'

A careful reading of the passages under this head shows that nearly all of them receive their Christian tone simply from the use of the words *God* and *Lord* (god, frea, metod, drihten), or of some equivalent expression (wuldres wealdend, fæder alwalda, ylða waldend, or the like). In a few cases these terms are qualified by an epithet and in a few others there is a statement, always in very few words, in regard to God's power or goodness. A classification based on these variations in the form of expression gives the following results:

(a). Cases in which a simple name of Deity is used; 39, viz.: god, 23; metod, 7; waldend, 4; drihten, 2; frea, 2; fæder, 1.

(b). Cases in which this name of Deity is qualified by an epithet, either an adjective, a genitive, or a word compounded

with the name-word, 28, viz. : god, 7 ; drihten, 8 ; waldend, 6 ; metod, 1 ; frea, 1 ; fæder, 1 ; cyning, 2 ; hyrde, 1 ; rædend, 1.

(c). Cases containing some Christian reflection, not simply a name or name accompanied by an epithet. Under this head fall seven cases, most of which have no more force than an epithet ; in fact, in no one of them is more expressed than is stated by implication in the cases under the second head. Such a statement, for example, as ' he hath power over all ' (he ah ealra gewæld, 1727), has no more force than the epithet ' all-powerful ' (alwalda, 316).

In all the Christian allusions of the poem, including those yet to be considered, there is one peculiarity that should not be overlooked. In no one of them do we find any reference to Christ, to the cross, to the virgin or the saints, to any doctrine of the church in regard to the trinity, the atonement, etc., or to the scriptures, to prophecy, or to the miracles. They might all have been written by Moses or David as easily as by an English monk. In fact, if it were not for the use of certain names and titles that have been appropriated by the church and thus given a technical meaning, it would not be difficult to find parallel expressions in Plato or Marcus Aurelius. This astonishing list of omissions seems to be without explanation if we assume that the poem first took its present shape at the hands of a Christian writer. We can well believe that many an inmate of the cloister had enough of the spirit of his fathers to find delight in tales of adventure by sea and land, and there is plenty of evidence that in many cases the monk was a kind of Friar Tuck, with only a thin veneer of Christianity, but we can hardly suppose that one could be found that would compose a poem and insert Christian reflections and yet fail to put in a single one on those phases of Christianity that were especially emphasized in the training of the time and that form the bulk of the poems professedly Christian.

The vague and colorless Christianity of these passages becomes very apparent if for the word *God* or equivalent epithet

we substitute *fate* or the name of some heathen divinity. No further change is needed in many of the passages cited to remove the Christian tone and make them entirely heathen. For example, in describing the avarice and cruelty of Here-mod (vv. 1716 ff.), the author says, 'Though the mighty God had exalted him with the joys of power and with strength, and had helped him more than all men, yet in his heart there grew up a cruel disposition, etc.' If for *God* we substitute *fate*, or some word of like meaning, the moral sentiment of the reflection remains, to be sure, but it is no longer a Christian sentiment. In fact, in many cases it is not necessary to change a word but only to assign to it its older meaning. When it is said that Grendel could not destroy the followers of Beowulf, *þa metod nolde* (v. 706), 'because the Lord willed it not,' it is quite as natural to render the clause 'fate willed it not,' thus giving to *metod* its older meaning. The sentiment of this translation finds a parallel in many other passages of the poem. It would require but little skill to remove the Christian tone of the whole, with the exception of two or three passages, by making a few verbal changes and giving to certain words the older meaning instead of the later one.

Now if these passages can be heathenized by a few changes of this kind it is a very natural hypothesis that they were Christianized in the same way, and such a supposition explains their occurrence and their peculiarities. We may assume the existence of an older poem composed by a heathen Scop and containing moral sentiments and reflections of the same character as those of Homer or Virgil or the Edda. Later a Christian monk "edits" it for Christian readers. Where the author has spoken of the gods, he changes the word to the singular or makes some other change in the wording so that the God of the Christians may be referred to. He substitutes a verse of his own, or a portion of a verse, when necessary, possibly omits portions that do not readily yield to simple amendment, but does not materially change the general tone, which remains, therefore, essentially heathen.

This method of incidental change explains the lack of all allusions to the leading doctrines of the Church and of any reference to Christ and his teaching, to say nothing of the many other things that we should expect to find, if we suppose that the work was composed in the first instance by a Christian.

This method of revision requires great skill, if it is to escape detection, and there are several of the passages quoted that seem to show that the task that the pious reviser took on himself was beyond his poetic skill. The Christian allusion often has the tone of a deliberate insertion rather than a reflection naturally suggested by the situation or the course of the thought. Moreover, the revision was not thorough, for there are many passages that still keep the heathen tone, especially those that name *Wyrd* as the controller of the destiny of men; in one case this word apparently stands as an appositive to a name of Deity. The lack of sequence, and in one or two cases even grammatical confusion, suggest that we shall not be far wrong if we assume that the changes are the work of some monkish copyist, whose piety exceeded his poetic powers. That this Christianizing of an older work is quite possible, hardly needs proof; if an illustration of the method is needed, it may be found in Alfred's *Boethius*.

This explanation, if accepted, will account for all the passages under the third and fourth heads, and for the allusion to the Flood under the first. It is not necessary to attempt to restore the older readings by conjecture; in some cases it is not hard to find traces that suggest a reconstruction, but in most of them only conjectures are possible. A trace of the older heathen version may be seen, I think, in the allusion to the Flood, just mentioned. The sinners that lost their lives by the waters are there called giants, and one or two peculiarities of expression lead me to hazard the suggestion that the passage, before it was Christianized, contained an allusion to the Northern tale of the war of the gods with the giants. The whole passage reads:

1688. on ðam wæs or writen
 fyrngewinnes syðþan flod ofsloh
 gifen geotende giganta cyn
 frecne geferdon þæt wæs fremde þeod
 ecean dryhtne him þæs endelean
 þurh wæteres wylm waldend sealde,

‘thereon was written the beginning of the ancient strife, when the flood, the pouring sea, destroyed the race of the giants (shameless was their behavior); that was a people hostile to the eternal Lord; the Ruler gave them a reward therefor through the whelming of water.’

There are still left three passages for which the hypothesis of alterations by a scribe does not seem to suffice, and which must be regarded as interpolations in a broader sense, either by the supposed reviser or by some one else. The longest of these is found in vv. 90–113, and contains the story of the Creation and Fall, with a reference to Cain as the father of evil monsters like Grendel. The same reference to Cain occurs again in vv. 1261–1266. The third case is the reference to idol-worship and ignorance of the true God in vv. 175–188. I give this first.

175. hwilum hie geheton æt hrærgtrafum
 wigweorþunga wordum bædon
 þæt him gastbona geoce gefremede
 wið þeodþreaum swylc wæs þeaw hyra
 hæþenra hyht helle gemundon
 in modsefan metod hie ne cuþon
 dæda demend ne wiston hie drihten god
 ne hie huru heofona helm herian ne cuþon
 wuldres waldend wa bið þæm ðe sceal
 þurh sliðne nið sawle bescufan
 in fyres fæþm frofre ne wenan
 wihte gewendan wel bið þæm þe mot
 æfter deaðdæge drihten secean
 and to fæder fæþmum freoðo wilnian,

‘at times they vowed honors in their temples, prayed that the devil would give them help against their woes. Such was their custom, the hope of the heathen; they thought on hell in their hearts, they knew not the Lord, the judge of deeds; they knew not the Lord God, nor could they praise the Keeper of Heaven, the Ruler of glory. Sad is it for him that must thrust his soul into the embrace of fire in direful enmity, nor hope for comfort or change; well it is for him that shall be allowed after his death-day to visit the Lord and enjoy protection in the bosom of the Father.’

This passage does not call for extended comment. Its Christian tone lies in the reflection with which it closes, which brings it also under the third class, and in the implied condemnation of heathenism contained in the statement that the Danes worshipped the devil and knew not the true God. But Hrothgar, the king of these same Danes, says that the holy God has sent Beowulf to his aid, that God can easily keep Grendel from his evil deeds, and thanks God for the sight of Grendel’s arm, which Beowulf has torn off in the fight. So, too, his queen, when she greets Beowulf, thanks God that her wish for a champion able to cope with the monster has been fulfilled, and the Danish coast-guard, after directing Beowulf and his comrades to the Hall, dismisses them with the pious wish, ‘May the All-ruling Father keep you!’ These and other instances are not in accord with the statement that the Danes knew not the true God, and seem to furnish good evidence that the passage containing the latter is an interpolation. I assume that the first reviser, in trying to put the poem in Christian garb, had left a little heathenism exposed here, as he has in other places, and that a later hand has added a moralizing passage on the wickedness of worshipping idols and the awful consequences to the worshipper.

There remains one case, the reference to Cain as the ancestor of Grendel and the other beings of earth, air and sea, who were put under ban by the coming of Christianity. This allusion, as was said, is found twice. The second passage is

short and will be considered with the longer one. It contains a direct allusion to the murder of Abel, which is only implied in the first, and repeats the statement that Cain was the progenitor of the various monsters. The two passages may best be treated together, for it is safe to assume that they are from the same hand.

It is in these two passages that we find the most distinctly Christian coloring of the whole poem. The first one extends through about twenty-four verses, but seems to be intermingled with references to Grendel and to the Danes, and as it stands in the MS. offers serious difficulties of interpretation and confusion of thought to a much greater degree than we should expect, even in Old English poetry. This confusion is not sufficient, of itself, to warrant us in pronouncing the passage a later addition, though it raises suspicion of its genuineness, but when we find that a re-arrangement makes the whole clear, this suspicion is strengthened until it approaches the character of proof. It can at least lay claim to consideration as a very good hypothesis.

An interpolation may be an intentional insertion by the copyist, and the motive for such insertion may be what it may; or it may be unintentional, the scribe inserting the matter because he supposes that it belongs there. The latter is most often the case when additional matter has been written on the margin. The copyist supposes that this matter has been added because it was omitted by the former scribe, and therefore puts it in. He does in this way just what the compositor now does with the additions of the proof-reader, and misplacement is likely to occur, as it now does, if the position of the new matter is not carefully marked.

It is in this way, as I suspect, that the passage under consideration found its way into the text of the poem. The MS. of the *Beowulf* that has reached us is a copy of an older one, on the margin of which, I assume, some pious owner had written some twenty or more verses about the creation, the crime and punishment of Cain and the monsters like Grendel,

whose origin was thus accounted for. This note occurs at the place where Grendel is first mentioned, and was supposed, no doubt, to make the work more fit for Christian readers and more edifying to Christian warriors. The copyist, supposing that this matter belonged to the story, copied it into the text, but in so doing he blundered badly and mixed the statements about Cain with those about Grendel into a story that is almost unintelligible.

The division and rearrangement that I propose is as follows :
Original ; vv. 102–104a ; 86–90a ; 115 ff.

Interpolated ; vv. 90b–101 ; 107–110 ; 104b–106 ; 111–114.

By putting the verses noted in this order and omitting those that I suppose to have been added later, we get what I suppose to have been the original form of the story. Hrothgar has built a hall and feasts there daily with his retainers. The writer goes on to say :

102. wæs se grimma gæst grendel haten
 mære mearcstapa se þe moras heold
 fen ȝ fæsten
86. ða se ellengæst earfoðlice
 þrage gepolode se þe in þystrum bad
 þæt he dogora gehwam dream gehyrde
 hludne in healle þær wæs hearpan sweg
 swutol sang scopes
115. Gewat ða neosian syþðan niht becom
 hean huses hu hit hringdene
 æfter beorþege gebun hæfdon
 Fand þa ðær inne æþelinga gedriht
 swefan æfter symble,

This arrangement leaves two verses incomplete, a result of the confused arrangement of the scribe who did not find it easy to fit the inserted matter to the old. But the story is clear and straight. It runs thus :

‘There was a cruel spirit named Grendel, a famed mark-treader, who held the moors and the fen as his

containing a reference to the Fall and the death of Abel are needed to make the proper connection between 101 and 107. It is noticeable that this gap is occupied in the MS. by the three verses in which Grendel and his dwelling-place are first mentioned. These verses, which in the rearrangement I have transposed to the beginning of the episode, where they naturally belong, have apparently crowded out a small portion of the interpolation. If the broken connection is restored by conjecture the story will run thus :

‘He that knew how to tell the tale of the beginning of men from of old has said that the Almighty made the earth, the fair-shining plain which the water encircles, that the Victorious set the brightness of sun and moon for a light to men and decked with bough and leafage the regions of the earth ; he also gave life to every living thing that dwells [therein]. Thus then mankind lived blessedly in joy, until one, the foe in hell, began to work mischief. [He beguiled them into disobedience, whereby they lost their home, and led Cain, their first-born, to slay his brother.] The Lord avenged on Cain’s race the slaying of Abel, he was not pleased with the murderous deed, but he, the Lord, drove him into exile far from mankind. The wretched man, after the Creator had outlawed him, inhabited awhile the land of the monsters ; from him sprang all the monsters, the Jotuns and elves and sea-beasts ; also the giants that long fought against God ; for that he gave them their meed.’

The other passage in which there is a reference to the descent of the various monsters from Cain contains about what we have supplied to make a consecutive story in the passage just given. It is as follows :

1261.	sipðan camp wearð
to ecgbanan	angan breþer
fæderenmæge	he þa fag gewat
morþre gemearcod	mandream fleon
westen warode	þanon woc fela

geosceaftgasta wæs þæra grendel sum
 heorowearh hetelic,

‘after Cain (so by conj.) became the slayer of his own brother, his father’s son; stained with murder and outlawed he fled the joys of men and dwelt in the desert. From him sprang many an accursed spirit; one of these was Grendel,’ etc.

The conclusions reached in this study of the Christian allusions in the *Beowulf* are these :—

1. Of the passages in the *Beowulf* that show a Christian coloring, two are interpolated. The interpolation is proved in the case of one of these by the statements in it, which are contradicted by the evidence of the poem itself; in the case of the other by the dislocated arrangement, which shows an unskilful insertion of marginal matter. A small portion of this latter is repeated by interpolation farther on.

2. All the other passages in which any Christian tone can be detected have been made to suggest Christian ideas by slight changes such as a copyist could easily make. The evidence for this conclusion is found in the colorless character of the allusions, which appears in the entire lack of reference to anything distinctively Christian as contrasted with heathenism. Only on some such theory can we explain the entire lack of any reference to Christ, to New Testament narratives and teachings, and to Church doctrines and practices most in vogue at the time.

3. From these two conclusions there naturally springs a third; that the *Beowulf* once existed as a whole without the Christian allusions.

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